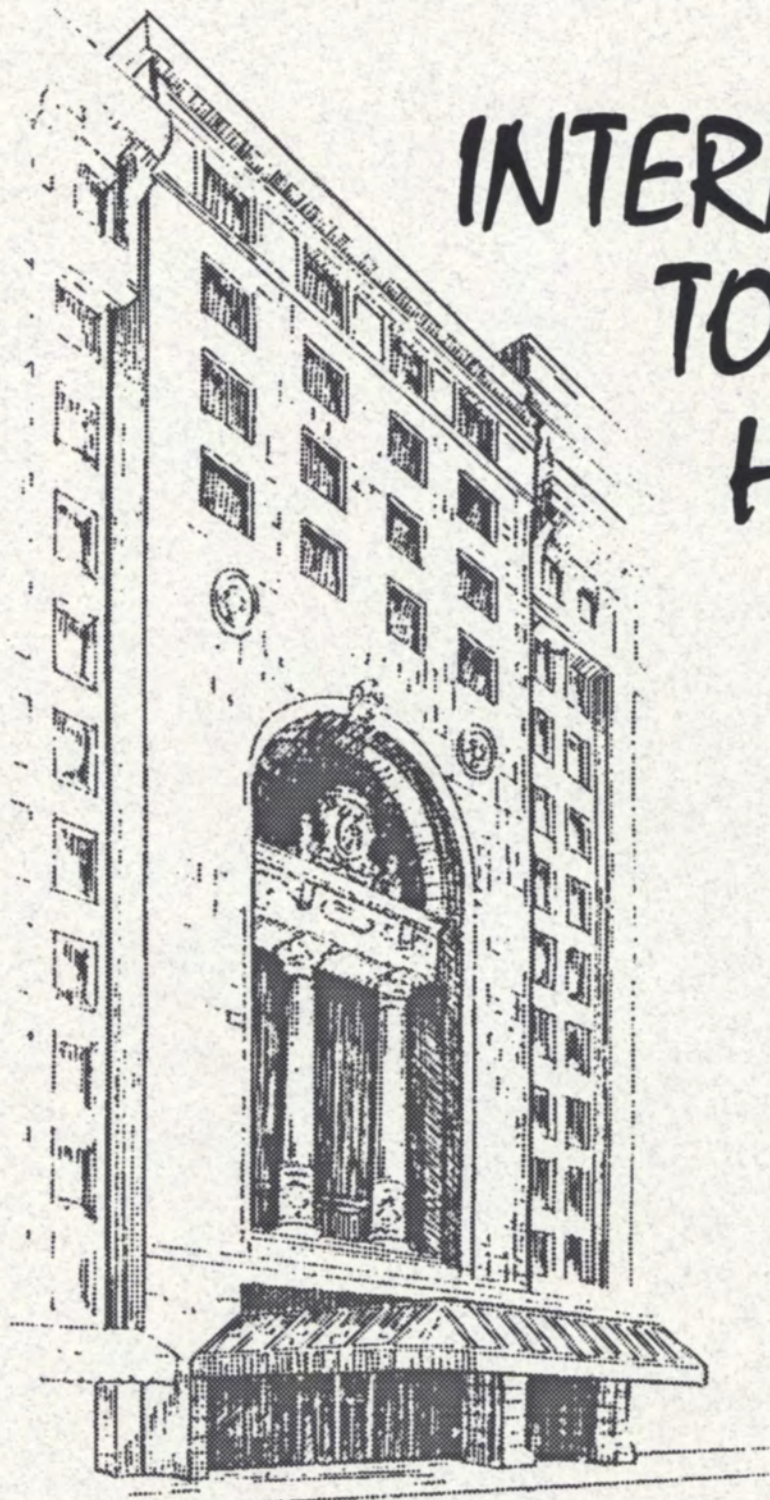




INTERNET TOWN HALL

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Internet Talk Radio
"Flame of the Internet"

A Radio Metaphor

Internet Talk Radio is a radio station that uses the Internet instead of air waves to move audio programs around the world. Internet Talk Radio combines professional journalism, multimedia, and the global Internet to form a new medium. Radio is the initial metaphor, combining interviews, news, and analysis with professional announcers and musicians to form programs. The programs are published on the Internet as audio files, where they are moved to networks in over 26 countries. Building on the existing Internet infrastructure, Internet Talk Radio will move over 200 Mbytes per week of audio data throughout the world.

Eventually, the files reach a local network where they are stored on a file server. Files can be transferred to the workstation and played individually, or can be multicast or broadcast over the organization's local network. Any modern workstation or PC can play the files using native support for multimedia distributed with the operating system. Radio is only a metaphor for this new medium. The user can treat the files as random-access radio, starting and stopping the programming, or changing the order of the show.

Internet Talk Radio uses a financial model based on sponsorship, giving brief acknowledgments to sponsors during the programming. Listeners are encouraged to copy the data as widely as possible, yielding a listener base and demographics which sponsors can judge against more traditional media. Initial sponsorship by Sun Microsystems and O'Reilly & Associates has validated this business model and other sponsors are signing up.

Beyond Radio

Preprogrammed audio streams are the beginning. As with any new medium, we start with an analogy and then modify it to suit the characteristics of the new medium. TV started out looking very much like a radio show where you could see the people. Internet Talk Radio starts out modeling itself as a cross between National Public Radio and the trade press: audio presentation of substantive information for the technical community.

The obvious extension is to add data types, starting with graphic images and video streams. Even today, researchers use the Internet to run a TV service, multicasting sessions from meetings of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) to people in 20 countries unable to attend in person. New data types can be combined with new ways of linking the listener to the source of the programming. Interactive game shows and talk shows where the listener can double click to participate are two examples. Other types of programs can be combined with the audio and video streams, as in the case of supporting a videoconference with digital document libraries to provide background information on a particular topic.

The Launch

The launch of Internet Talk Radio is scheduled for March 31. After a front-page *New York Times* article, syndicated in over 100 newspapers, there has been a flurry of publicity for the new service. Internet Talk Radio has been featured in stories in publications ranging from *Newsday* to the *Bangkok Post* to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Numerous stories have appeared in the trade press for both the computer and broadcast industries and a veritable deluge of mail has been received from the Internet community.

INTERNET TALK RADIO
GEEK
of the
WEEK

Geek of the Week
"The Medium is the Message"

A New Kind of Trade Press

Internet Talk Radio models itself after traditional media such as National Public Radio, providing sophisticated, substantive information to the engineering community. The current trade press has concentrated on product introductions and marketing, leaving a gaping hole for real technical information.

Instead of covering press releases of new products, Internet Talk Radio wants to explain how the underlying technology works. Instead of covering a new SNMP-compliant product, for example, we would explain the features in the new version of SNMP. Instead of featuring an announcement of a commercial Frame Relay service by a telephone company, we explain what Frame Relay is and how it relates to ATM. A technically sophisticated stream of programming will attract a large number of working engineers and networking professionals hungry for real information.

Geek of the Week

The flagship feature of Internet Talk Radio is *Geek of the Week*, an interview with a prominent member of the technical community. The first interview is with Dr. Marshall T. Rose, a leading authority on network management and messaging. Subsequent interviews feature noted researchers and engineers such as Milo Medin, manager of the NASA Science Internet; Brewster Kahle, the inventor of WAIS; and Dr. Stephen Deering, the inventor of IP multicasting and an authority on mobile networking.

Interspersed with the 30-minute interviews are a variety of featurettes. *Book Byte* features Daniel Doernberg, the founder of Computer Literacy Bookshops. *The Incidental Tourist* features restaurant reviews from out of the way places. *Name That Acronym* features obscure and arcane letter combinations that will stump even the most hardened engineer. Many other short features are planned to supplement the main interview each week.

Beyond the Geeks

The initial programming of interviews will be quickly supplemented with coverage of major conferences. Groups ranging from INTEROP to the Internet Society to ACM SIGCOMM have granted permission for Internet Talk Radio to tape and rebroadcast conference sessions. Internet Talk Radio will cover these sessions, rebroadcasting highlights and providing news and analysis. Our goal is to produce 5 hours per week of programming, providing a daily dose of information that network managers and engineers can digest while they are reading their mail or shuffling paper. We would like to see daily summaries of mailing list activities, a daily traffic report on the Internet infrastructure, and a broad range of reports from around the world.

Internet Talk Radio starts out with a strong focus on the Internet, trying to build an audience in the technical community. We will quickly supplement the network-focused material with information on topics such as Unix, graphics, databases, and other technical topics. There is no reason why others should not take the example of Internet Talk Radio and extend it to other fields, such as physics, the space sciences, and other areas in rapid technical change. We intend to work closely with other groups to help them begin efforts in desktop broadcasting over the Internet.





Internet Town Hall
"Town Crier to the Global Village"

Hey! We Can Do That!

Throughout the 1992 presidential campaign, there was a great deal of rhetoric about a new kind of town hall, one that would make use of information superhighways to usher in a new age of democracy. While most of the rhetoric used broad, sweeping language, occasionally we would see glimpses of what people were envisioning: large banks of 800 numbers that would provide instantaneous polling.

Those of us that lead much of our professional lives, and increasingly our personal lives, on the Internet know that a new kind of town hall can be much more than some glorified telemarketing operation. Building a town hall on a general infrastructure allows a truly unique form of participatory democracy, a forum where national leaders can engage in a dialogue with the American people.

The National Press Club

The Internet Multicasting Corporation has recently received permission from the National Press Club to rebroadcast all their functions on the Internet. We will join with C-SPAN and National Public Radio in covering events such as the Club's Luncheon series, featuring addresses by speakers ranging from Ross Perot to Julia Childs. The National Press Club has granted permission to run a 10 Mbps digital line into the club, providing support for large data streams. The Internet Multicasting Corporation will furnish the members of the Club with Internet connectivity and will establish a monthly seminar on the Internet for the Washington press corps.

The Town Hall

We would use the National Press Club as the foundation for an Internet Town Hall, a place where citizens can engage in a dialogue with their leaders. We would establish a monthly event featuring a group of citizens talking to a national leader. The Internet Town Hall would be announced April 28 at the Global Schoolhouse, an event sponsored by the National Science Foundation and produced by the Internet Multicasting Corporation.

The Global Schoolhouse Project involves children in elementary classrooms in California, Virginia, Tennessee, and London. The children are spending the months of March and April reading Al Gore's book on the environment and conducting original research on environmental awareness in their community. Vice President Gore has been invited to participate in a video conference over the Internet in which the children would brief him on the results of their research and discuss ways to help the environment.

The Internet Town Hall would continue as a monthly event. Each month a topic would be picked and a group of citizens would do preparatory research. At the end of the month, the citizens would engage in a dialogue with one of our national leaders. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, for example, has tentatively agreed to participate.

Each Internet Town Hall would highlight a new aspect of technology that shows how a true forum for democratic values can be built on the Internet. After the initial rollout of videoconferencing on Macintoshes, we would feature technologies such as custom databases which can be searched using natural language, the Cornell Digital Library project, instant polls, multicasting, and other examples of the technology at work. The Internet Town Hall would thus be a forum that highlights technology at the same time as it promotes democratic values.



Building the Town Hall "A National Forum"

A Broadbased Consortium

The Internet Town Hall will be established in two stages, starting with a base of operations for regular National Press Club events and moving on to form the monthly Internet Town Hall. The initial announcement would be at the conclusion of the NSF Global Schoolhouse Project, a project which involves support from a large number of organizations ranging from Sun Microsystems, Apple, Cisco, and Sun to Cornell and CERFnet.

The National Science Foundation has agreed to be a co-sponsor of the Internet Town Hall and we are confident that the National Press Club would also agree to cosponsor the activity. Organizations such as Xerox PARC and Cornell have all agreed to lend support to the activity.

Sponsorship of the Town Hall

Support of the Internet Town Hall and the National Press Club broadcasts would reach a potential audience of approximately 1.3 million users who have connected their workstations to the Internet, not to mention the million of future users on an infrastructure that is growing at 15-20 percent per month. The direct impact would thus be to reach a very large number of computer users in academic, commercial, and government institutions.

Sponsorship would have several other benefits. The monthly series of seminars at the National Press Club on the Internet would be aimed at the Washington press corps and the sponsor would receive credit each month. Perhaps most important would be secondary benefits: the Internet Town Hall would be hosted in a very visible forum and numerous articles would be written by the general media about the project. The hundreds of articles that have already been written about Internet Talk Radio are firm evidence that this secondary and tertiary publicity reaches vast numbers of people.

Can We Do It?

The Internet Town Hall is a highly ambitious project, but one with a high probability of success. Cosponsorship by the National Science Foundation and the National Press Club, together with the initial blizzard of favorable publicity makes this a project which can make a real difference.

The project director, Carl Malamud, has a long history of executing unusual projects on deadline. Projects include authoring seven professional reference books, including the three-volume *Analyzing Networks* series and *STACKS* and *Exploring the Internet*, the INTEROP Books. He has written for most trade publications, including stints as a regular columnist for *Communications Week*, *Data Communications*, and the *Bangkok Post*. Malamud has served as a consultant to many large computer firms and government agencies. He was responsible for a year-long successful campaign against the international standards bodies to post key technical documents on the Internet.

Networking and the Internet are enjoying a spate of publicity and goodwill. The opportunity is now available to benefit from that publicity and turn the goodwill into something concrete. The Internet Town Hall is a unique opportunity to move computing and networking onto the national stage. Promoting a national dialogue while highlighting new technology will be a visible, valuable addition to the Internet and to America.